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041504Z Mar 02

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	USNW-00	DODE-00
	DS-00	EUR-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	LAB-01	VCE-00	M-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	SSO-00
	SS-00	EPAE-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/005W
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1086
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY
OAU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000565

SIPDIS

AF FOR A/S KANSTEINER
NSC FOR AFRICA SR ADVISER FRAZER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/04/2012
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [ZI](#) [SF](#)
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE ON ZIMBABWE FROM
HARARE: SIMILAR ANALYSIS, UNCLEAR COURSE OF ACTION

REF: (A)FBIS RESTON AFP20020304000023, (B)FBIS RESTON

AFP200203040069, (C)FBIS RESTON AFP20020303000105
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CLASSIFIED BY JOSEPH G. SULLIVAN FOR REASONS 1.5B/D

1.(C) SUMMARY: THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH SOUTH AFRICAN HIGH COMMISSIONER JEREMY NDOU ON MARCH 4 TO COMPARE NOTES ON THE ZIMBABWEAN ELECTION PROCESS, LIKELY SCENARIOS AND POSSIBLE RESPONSES. THE OFFICIAL SOUTH AFRICAN OBSERVER DELEGATION HAS BEEN ACTIVE, BUT DISCREET IN THEIR PUBLIC COMMENTS, WHILE SEEKING TO GET THE GOZ TO ADDRESS THEIR CONCERNS WITH MIXED RESULTS. ACCORDING TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN HC, SOUTH AFRICA BELIEVES PRIVATELY THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIAL PROBLEMS IN ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT DUE MOSTLY TO THE GOVERNMENT'S DELIBERATE USE OF VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION AS WELL AS CONTINUING PROBLEMS IN FAIRNESS OF RULES AND PROCEDURES. NDOU SAW THE LIKELY OUTCOMES AS A NARROW MDC VICTORY OR A NARROW ZANU-PF VICTORY AND FORESAW PROBLEMS WITH EITHER LOSER ACCEPTING THE RESULTS. HE HOPED THAT A VICTORIOUS MDC WOULD AGREE TO A SORT OF NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT, BUT FEARED THAT A VICTORIOUS ZANU WOULD SEEK TO DESTROY THE TSVANGIRAI AND THE MDC AS A CREDIBLE OPPOSITION. HE HAD NO ANSWER FOR HOW SOUTH AFRICA WOULD REACT TO A ZANU-PF VICTORY WHOSE RESULT APPEARED TO BE SECURED BY FRAUD OTHER THAN TO QUESTION WHETHER SOUTH AFRICA WOULD SEEK TO INSIST ON NEW ELECTIONS WHICH ZANU-PF WOULD REJECT. HE AGREED THAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS NEED TO COORDINATE VERY CLOSELY IN COMING DAYS, BOTH IN HARARE AND IN PRETORIA/CAPETOWN. END SUMMARY

[12.](#) (U) THE SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICIAL OBSERVER DELEGATION
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(SAOM) INCREASED TO OVER 50 MEMBERS IN RECENT DAYS AND WILL BE HEADED BY THE MINISTERS OF INTERNAL SECURITY AND TRANSPORTATION WHO ARRIVED MARCH 4 TO STAY UNTIL ABOUT MARCH 14. AS INDICATED REFTELS, THE SAOM HAS BEEN VERY DISCREET IN PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS, SUGGESTING THERE WERE PROBLEMS WITH POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND ELECTION PROCEDURES, BUT SEEKING TO RESOLVE THESE PRIVATELY. THE DELEGATION HAD ALSO RAISED THE POSSIBLE CHARGE OF TREASON AGAINST OPPOSITION CANDIDATE TSVANGIRAI FOR TREASON WITH THE GOZ IN ORDER TO FORCE THE GOZ TO CLARIFY WHICH OF THE TWO VERSIONS IT HAD PUT OUT WAS CORRECT. (IN THE END, THE GOZ STATED THAT TSVANGIRAI WAS ONLY WARNED THAT HE MIGHT BE CHARGED, BUT WOULD NOT BE CHARGED OR ARRESTED PRIOR TO ELECTIONS.) IN ADDITION TO THE SAOM, SOUTH AFRICANS ARE PARTICIPATING IN SEPARATE ANC, SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY AND SADC-PF DELEGATIONS.

3.(C) SAOM FINDINGS AND ACTIONS

HC NDOU SAID THAT THE SAOM HAD FOUND A DELIBERATE GOZ PRACTICE OF VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION UTILIZING YOUTH BRIGADES AND OTHERS. THIS VIOLENCE WAS MUCH MORE ORGANIZED AND TARGETED THAN VIOLENCE IN THE 2000 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION. THE SAOM HAD RAISED THEIR CONCERNS WITH THE GOZ, INCLUDING OVER VIOLENCE AFFECTING OBSERVERS AND HAD SOME OF THEIR CONCERNS ADDRESSED; E.G. PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKER MNANGAGWA FLEW TO KWEKWE TO CONTROL THE SITUATION AFTER AN MDC OFFICE WAS ATTACKED WHILE THE SAOM TEAM WAS MEETING THERE. NDOU EXPRESSED
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IRRITATION THAT NAMIBIAN GOVERNMENT OBSERVER MBUENDE HAD STATED THAT REPORTS OF VIOLENCE WERE OVERBLOWN WHEN ONLY IN THE COUNTRY SEVERAL DAYS AND WITHOUT HAVING CHECKED WITH OTHER OBSERVER MISSIONS. THE HC WAS ALSO DISMAYED BY COMMONWEALTH OBSERVER HEAD ABU BAKAR'S PUBLIC COMMENTS THAT THE PRESS WAS EXAGGERATING THE DEGREE OF ELECTION VIOLENCE. HE ASCRIBING THIS TO INSUFFICIENT CARE IN REMARKS THAT ZIMBABWEAN MEDIA WOULD EDIT TO SERVE THEIR INTERESTS, AND TO THE FACT THAT ABU BAKAR WAS THE GOZ'S OWN RECOMMENDATION TO HEAD THE COMMONWEALTH OBSERVER MISSION. NDOU ALSO SAID THAT THE SAOM HAD COMPLAINED OVER THE FREQUENT BLOCKING OR CANCELLATION OF MDC RALLIES, WHILE NOT ONE ZANU-PF RALLY HAD BEEN STOPPED, AND OVER PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE CONTINUED FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE FINAL LIST OF POLLING PLACES TO THE PUBLIC OR OPPOSITION PARTIES. THE HC SAID THAT DEPUTY PRESIDENT ZUMA'S VISIT LAST WEEK WAS INTENDED TO COORDINATE SAG AND GOZ POSITIONS IN ADVANCE OF CHOGM AND WAS NOT DECISIVE ON BROADER ISSUES.

4.(C) LIKELY ELECTION OUTCOMES

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	VCE-00	M-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	SSO-00	SS-00
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NDOU BELIEVED THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOMES WERE EITHER A NARROW MDC VICTORY OR A NARROW ZANU-PF VICTORY. HE BELIEVED THE MDC WAS PREPARED, IN THE EVENT OF VICTORY, TO SHARE POWER, NOT IN A NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THE ZANU-PF LEADERSHIP WOULD CHOOSE ITS REPRESENTATIVES, BUT IN A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THE MDC WOULD DESIGNATE ZANU-PF MEMBERS TO SERVE IN ITS CABINET. HE EXPRESSED CONCERNS THAT ZANU-PF, WHILE SAYING IT WAS PREPARED TO LIVE WITH A LOSS, DID NOT APPEAR READY TO DO SO. INSTEAD, ZANU-PF APPEARED READY TO USE DEMONSTRATIONS AND PUBLIC PRESSURE BY ORCHESTRATED ZANU-PF GROUPS TO PREVENT AN MDC ASSUMPTION OF POWER AND MIGHT ALSO CALL UPON THE MILITARY TO PREVENT AN MDC ASSUMPTION OF POWER. NDOU DID NOT THINK THAT THE GOZ COULD CREDIBLY ARREST AND CHARGE TSVANGIRAI FOR TREASON OR ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION IN THE WAKE OF AN MDC VICTORY. HE BELIEVED THAT SUCH A TACTIC WOULD BE TOO TRANSPARENT TO BE ACCEPTABLE. NDOU ALSO SAID THAT THE WHOLE ASSASSINATION PLOT ALLEGATION WAS NOT CREDIBLE, ALTHOUGH HE EXPRESSED DISMAY THAT TSVANGIRAI COULD HAVE ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE SET UP IN THIS FASHION.

15. (C) IN THE EVENT OF A NARROW ZANU-PF VICTORY, TAINTED BY ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND FRAUD, NDOU FEARED PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS BY THE MDC AND ITS SUPPORTERS. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS COULD BE SUCCESSFUL AND ANTICIPATED THAT THE GOZ WOULD DO WHATEVER IT TOOK TO BRING THEM UNDER CONTROL.

6.(C) SOUTH AFRICAN RESPONSES

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NDOU SAID THAT THE SAG WAS PREPARED TO ACT TO PREVENT ZANU-PF FRUSTRATION OF AN MDC VICTORY. HE SAID THAT PRESIDENT MBEKI WOULD BE FOLLOWING EVENTS CLOSELY AND WOULD BE READY TO MAKE CONTACTS. HE ALSO SAID THAT SADP LEADERS HAD GOOD ACCESS AND RELATIONS WITH ZDF COMMANDERS AND COULD ALSO COUNSEL AGAINST ANTI-DEMOCRATIC OR VIOLENT ACTIONS. NDOU WAS LESS CERTAIN WHAT THE SAG WOULD DO IN THE EVENT OF A ZANU-PF VICTORY BY FRAUD OR MANIPULATION, NOTING THAT THE ZANU-PF WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO ACCEPT ANY CALL FOR A NEW ELECTION.

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